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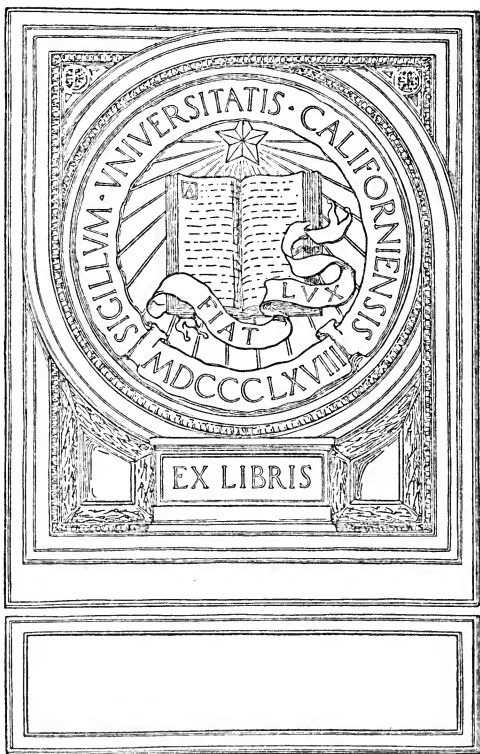


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The FOUR WINDS OF EIRINN

Poems by
ANNA MAC MANUS.
(ETHNA CARBERY.)

M. H. GILL & SON
DUBLIN.



100

(F)

A 10x10 grid of 100 small, stylized human figures in various poses, representing the population of the world.

MISS



Very sincerely yours
Anna Mac Mann

The Four Winds of
Eirinn.

POEMS BY

Mrs. ANNA *Johnston* MACMANUS,
("ETHNA CARBERY.")

EDITED BY SEUMAS MACMANUS.

FIFTH EDITION.

Dublin :
M. H. GILL AND SON, O'CONNELL STREET, UPPER,

1902

TO VINDICATE
ABROGATION

829
M167
fou

Dublin:
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Printed on paper of Irish Manufacture.

DO CONNRAD NA GAEILGE I O-TÍR
AN AIRGÍO,

ASUR DÁ N-ULACDARÁN, AN T-ÁDAIR ÉAMONN Ua
FLANNGAILE, A TÍOOLAICIM AN LEADAIRÍN REO
MAR GEALL AR AN OBDAIRMÓR TÁ RIAD A DÉANAMH
CUM TEANGA ASUR NÁIRIÚNTAÉT NA h-ÉIREANN
A TADDAIRT AR N-AIR.

ÉITHE NÍ CAIRBRE.

Bealtaine, 1901.

*To the Gaelic League of Argentina, and its
President Father Edmund O'Flannery,*

I dedicate this little volume of verse, in recognition
of their work on behalf of the Language and the
Nationality of that country, which, with the seas of,
half the world between, they still call their own:

ETHNA CARBERY:

May, 1901.

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ANNA JOHNSTON MACMANUS.

("ETHNA CARBERY");

In the flower of her youth and the blossoming
of her genius,

Closed her eyes on Ireland of her heart's love,

APRIL 2nd, 1902.

Deannaict Dé le n-a h-anam.

The voice of the singer is silenced, the heart is stilled, the hand grown cold, and the loveful eyes are closed for evermore. A light has been quenched in Eirinn: another hope has gone under the green sod.

It was God's will. He knows what is best.
So n-déantar do toil, a Dia.

She that sang these songs, and died—with a song on her lips, and youth's bloom still on her cheeks—sang, as does the lark, because her heart, always filled with happiness and love, delighted to spill in melody upon the earth its overflowing joys. For, a kind God had compressed into her short years more exuberant happiness than is usually bestowed in a long life.

Within Ireland this grand old chieftainry of Tír-Chonaill had always, strangely, drawn her affection. She dreamt and sang of it for long years before she was fated to see it. Joyously, with me, she came at length to the welcoming arms which our mountains reached out to her—unthinking that she came but to quaff her final cup of bliss, and bequeath her bones to the Hills of her Heart for ever.

From childhood till the closing hour, every fibre of her frame vibrated with love of Ireland. Before the tabernacle of poor Ireland's hopes she burned in her bosom a perpetual flame of faith. Her great warm heart kept the door of its fondest affection wide open to all who loved Ireland, and lived for Ireland, and strove for Ireland—and in her heart of hearts was sacredly cherished the Memory of the holy Dead who died for Ireland.

Our Motherland has had daughters as noble, as brave, as faithful and loving as Anna Johnston, but never was gathered to the Mother's breast one MORE noble-souled, upright, courageous of heart, or one MORE passionately faithful, than she.

Sad it is to think that she who struggled so bravely onward during the Night—when stouter than she grew weary, and despaired, and lagged behind—should have been dismissed to the unending slumber before there burst upon her hungering vision the glorious Dawning of the Day—the first slender spear.

of which, with her spirit eyes, she believed she saw striking the sky!

Optimistic, hopeful, strong, she ever kept her face to the East. "Only another hill or two and we'll surely meet the Dawn." During the last few weeks of her journey I came to see that, like the King of Ireland's Son in the old tales we loved, she was toiling up the Hill of the World's End—climbing it alone, though it had been her constant prayer that we should bend to it hand in hand. And God knows, as I who watched know, the climb was a difficult one and a distressing. Yet her lips parted not in murmur: and the smile that had played there all her life did not leave her eyes now. On a beautiful morn of the glorious Eastertide her task was done: she only paused to cast back one last look; and then, still telling through her tightening fingers the brown beads that had cheered her on the way, she stepped over the crest, and went out of our sight for ever.

But I know that, pure of heart, white of soul, as she was, she walked into a Dawning resplendent and never-ending.

SEUMAS MACMANUS.

Donegal, Bealtaine, 1902.



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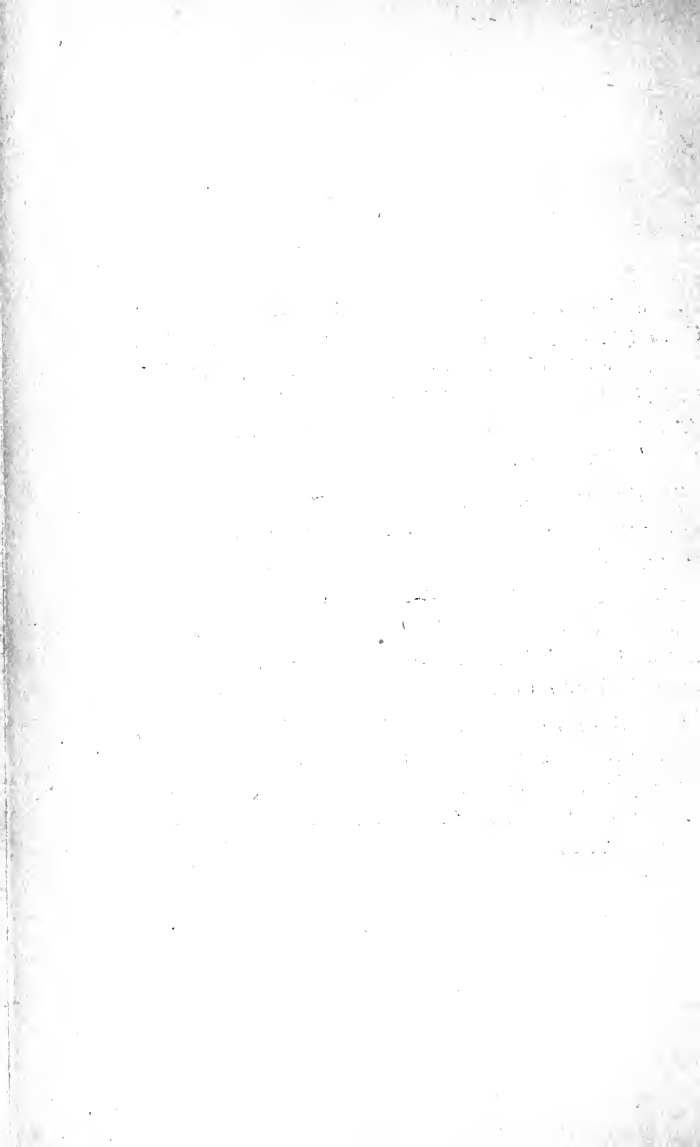
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Several of these poems appeared in the *Shan Van Vocht* (Belfast), from the years 1896 to 1899. The others found a place in *United Ireland*, and *The United Irishman* (Dublin); *Harper's Magazine*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Lippincott's*, *The Criterion*, and *The Bookman* (U.S.A.)

To the courtesy of the Editors of these Magazines and Journals the Editor is indebted for permission to re-publish.

About two-thirds of this book was prepared for publication by the author some time before her death. One-third of the book, therefore, goes forth unpolished and unrevised.

Several of the songs contained herein have been, and are being, set to music by Mrs. C. MILLIGAN FOX (37 Wynnstay Gardens, Kensington, London), and Mrs. EDITH WHEELER (Thornhill Gardens, Marlboro' Park, Belfast).





THE
POEMS OF ETHNA CARBERY.



THE COLD SLEEP OF BRIGHIDIN.*

There's a sweet sleep for my love by yon glimmering
blue wave,
But alas! it is a cold sleep in a green-happed narrow
grave.

O shadowy Finn, move slowly,
Break not her peace so holy,

Stir not her slumber in the grass your restless ripples
lave.

My Heart's Desire, my Treasure, our wooing time was
brief,

From the misty dawns of April till the fading of the leaf,
From the first clear cuckoo calling

Till the harvest gold was falling,

And my store of joy was garnered at the binding of
the sheaf.

* In the light of after-events, this song—even in the very particulars of season and month—proves to have been the singer's own inspired death-lament.

There came another lover, more swift than I, more
strong,
He bore away my little love in middle of her song ;
 Silent, ah me ! his wooing,
 And silent his pursuing,
Silent he stretched his arms to her who did not tarry
long.

So in his House of Quiet she keeps her troth for aye
With him, the stronger lover, until the Judgment Day :
 And I go lonely, lonely,
 Bereft of my one only
Bright star, Rose-blossom, Singing-bird that held the
year at May.

The purple mountains guard her, the valley folds her in,
In dreams I see her walking with angels cleansed of sin.
 Is heaven too high and saintly
 For her to hear, though faintly,
One word of all my grieving on her grave beside Loch
Finn ?



SHIELA NÍ GARA:

SHIELA NÍ GARA, it is lonesome where you bide,
With the plover circling over and the sagans
 spreading wide,
With an empty sea before you, and behind a wailing
 world,
Where the sword lieth rusty and the Banner Blue is
 furled.

Is it a sail ye wait, Shiela? "Yea, from the westering
 sun."
Shall it bring joy or sorrow? "Oh, joy sadly won."
Shall it bring peace or conflict? "The pibroch in the
 glen,
And the flash and crash of battle where my banner
 shines again."

Green spears of Hope rise round you like grass-blades
 after drouth,
And there blows a red wind from the East, a white
 wind from the South,
A brown wind from the West, *a grádh*, a brown wind
 from the West—
But the black, black wind from Northern hills, how
 can you love it best?

Said Shiela ní Gara, "'Tis a kind wind and a true,
For it rustled soft through Aileach's halls and stirred
the hair of Hugh ;
Then blow, wind ! and snow, wind ! What matters
storm to me,
Now I know the fairy sleep must break and let the
sleepers free."

But, Shiela ní Gara, why rouse the stony dead,
Since at your call a living host will circle you instead?
Long is our hunger for your voice, the hour is drawing
near—
*Oh, Dark Rose of our Passion—call, and our hearts
shall hear !*



IN TÍR-NA'N-OG.

In Tír-na'n-Og,
In Tír-na'n-Og,

Summer and spring go hand in hand, and in the
radiant weather
Brown autumn leaves and winter snow come floating
down together.

In Tír-na'n-Og,
In Tír-na'n-Og,

The sagans sway this way and that, the twisted fern
uncloses,
The quicken-berry hides its red above the tender roses;

In Tír-na'n-Og,
In Tír-na'n-Og,

The blackbird lilt, the robin chirps, the linnet wearies
never,
They pipe to dancing feet of *Sidhe* and thus shall
pipe for ever.

In Tír-na'n-Og,
In Tír-na'n-Og,

All in a drift of apple-blooms my true love there is
roaming,
He will not come although I pray from dawning until
gloaming.

In Tír-na'n-Og,

In Tír-na'n-Og,

The *Sidhe* desired my Heart's Delight, they lured him
from my keeping,

He stepped within a fairy ring while all the world
was sleeping.

In Tír-na'n-Og,

In Tír-na'n-Og,

He hath forgotten hill and glen where misty shadows
gather,

The bleating of the mountain sheep, the cabin of his
father.

In Tír-na'n-Og,

In Tír-na'n-Og,

He wanders in a happy dream thro' scented golden
hours,

He flutes, to woo a fairy love, knee deep in fairy flowers.

In Tír-na'n-Og,

In Tír-na'n-Og,

No memory hath he of my face, no sorrow for my
sorrow,

My flax is spun, my wheel is hushed, and so I wait
the morrow.



THE SONG OF CIABHAN.

To the Isle of Peace
I turn our prow :
No angry seas
Shall fright you now ;
But calm lake waters
Lie smooth as glass,
Where we shall pass
From the place of slaughters.

The slow blue stars
Beneath your brows
At the clash of wars
Need never rouse ;
Through day hours winging,
My love shall tend,
And my gold harp send
You to sleep with singing.

Tall blossoms gleam
Where the spear-sharp sedge
Sways in its dream
By the wavelet's edge ;
There shall come to harm you
No scourging wind ;
But south-blown, kind,
It shall soothe and charm you.

A wattled dun
Safe-sheltered, strong,
For my treasured one
Hath waited long;
Of the wild bee's honey
A queenly fare
Shall glad you there
In a grianán sunny.

Broad wings of red,
And green and azure,
Make a roof outspread
To give you pleasure;
Strange scrolls are shining
On walls lime-white—
A mystic sight
In their wondrous twining.

Its oaken door
Hath a threshold shady,
To lure you o'er,
O sunbright lady.
My wolf-hound lingers
Beside our seat
For the stroking, Sweet,
Of your slender fingers.

In our Isle the calm
Slow-dropping dew
Shall shed its balm
'Twixt night and you:
And peace shall hover,
Till Angus calls,
And the Great Peace falls
On beloved and lover.

MO CHRAOIBHÍN CNO.*

A Sword of Light hath pierced the dark, our
eyes have seen the star.

O Mother, leave the ways of sleep now days of promise
are :

The rusty spears upon your walls are stirring to and
fro,

In dreams they front uplifted shields—Then wake,
Mo Chraoibhin Cno !

The little waves creep whispering where sedges fold
you in,

And round you are the barrows of your buried kith
and kin ;

Oh ! famine-wasted, fever-burnt, they faded like the
snow

Or set their hearts to meet the steel—for you,
Mo Chraoibhin Cno !

Their names are blest, their *caoine* sung, our bitter
tears are dried ;

We bury Sorrow in their graves, Patience we cast
aside ;

Within the gloom we hear a voice that once was ours
to know—

'Tis Freedom—Freedom calling loud, Arise !
Mo Chraoibhin Cno !

* Pr. *Mo chreeveen no.* "My cluster of nuts"=my brown-haired girl, *i.e.*, Ireland.

Afar beyond that empty sea, on many a battle-place,
Your sons have stretched brave hands to death before
 the foeman's face—
Down the sad silence of your rest their war-notes
 faintly blow,
And bear an echo of your name—of yours,
 Mo Chraoibhin Cno!

Then wake, *a grádh!* We yet shall win a gold crown
 for your head,
Strong wine to make a royal feast—the white wine
 and the red—
And in your oaken mether the yellow mead shall flow,
What day you rise, in all men's eyes—a Queen,
 Mo Chraoibhin Cno!

The silver speech our fathers knew shall once again
 be heard;
The fire-lit story, crooning song, sweeter than lilt of
 bird;
Your quicken-tree shall break in flower, its ruddy fruit
 shall glow,
And the Gentle People dance beneath its shade—
 Mo Chraoibhin Cno!

There shall be peace and plenty—the kindly open
 door;
Blessings on all who come and go—the prosperous or
 the poor—
The misty glens and purple hills a fairer tint shall
 show,
When your splendid Sun shall ride the skies again—
 Mo Chraoibhin Cno!

THE WELL O' THE WORLD'S END.

*Beyond the four seas of Éire, beyond the sunset's
rim,
It lies half-forgot, in a valley deep and dim ;
Like a star of fire from the skies' gold tire,
And whoso drinks the nine drops shall win his
heart's desire—
At the Well o' the World's End.*

What go ye seeking, seeking, seeking,
O girl white-bosomed, O girl fair and young ?
"I seek the Well-water, the cool Well-water,
That my love may have love for me ever on his
tongue."

What go ye seeking, seeking, seeking,
O lad of the dreaming eyes, slender lad and tall ?
"I seek the Well-water, the cool Well-water,
That the *cailín* I love best may love me best of all."

What go ye seeking, seeking, seeking,
O mother, with your little babe folded on your arm ?
"I seek the Well-water, the cool Well-water,
That nine drops upon his lips may shield my child
from harm."

What go ye seeking, seeking, seeking,
O gray head, long weary of the vigil that ye keep ?
"I seek the Well-water, the cool Well-water,
That nigh it I may rest awhile, and after fall asleep."

THE KING OF IRELAND'S CAIRN.

*Blow softly down the valley,
O wind, and stir the fern
That waves its green fronds over
The King of Ireland's Cairn.*

Here in his last wild foray
He fell, and here he lies—
His armour makes no rattle,
The clay is in his eyes.

His spear, that once was lightning
Hurled with unerring hand,
Rusts by his fleshless fingers
Beside his battle brand.

His shield that made a pillow
Beneath his noble head,
Hath mouldered, quite forgotten,
With the half-forgotten dead.

Say, doth his ghost remember
Old fights—old revellings,
When the victor-chant re-echoed
In Tara of the Kings?

Say, down those Halls of Quiet
Doth he cry upon his Queen?
Or doth he sleep contented
To dream of what has been?

Nay, nay, he still is kingly—
He wanders in a glen
Where Fionn goes by a-hunting
With misty Fenian men.

He sees the hounds of Wonder
Bring down their fleeting prey
He sees the swift blood flowing
At dawning of the day.

At night he holds his revels
Just as a king might do—
But the ghostly mirth is silent,
The harp-song silent too!

And he who crowns the feasting,
His shadowy Queen beside,
Is pale as when they stretched him
That bitter eve he died.

 ; : : ; :

'Tis well he seeks no tidings—
His heart would ache to know
That all is changed in Ireland,
And Tara lieth low.

That we go wailing, wailing,
Around a foreign horde—
Nor raise the call to conflict,
Nor ever draw the sword.

TURLOUGH MACSWEENEY:

*A health to you, Piper,
And your pipes silver-tongued, clear and sweet
in their crooning!*

Full of the music they gathered at morn
On your high heather hills from the lark on the
wing,
From the blackbird at eve on the blossoming thorn,
From the little green linnet whose plaining they sing,
And the joy and the hope in the heart of the Spring,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

Play us our Eire's most sorrowful songs,
As she sits by her reeds near the wash of the wave,
That the coldest may thrill at the count of her wrongs,
That the sword may flash forth from the scabbard
to save,
And the wide land awake at the wrath of the brave,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

Play as the bards played in days long ago,
When C'Donnell, arrayed for the foray or feast,
With your kinsmen from Bannat and Fannat and Doe,
With piping and harping, and blessing of priest,
Rode out in the blaze of the sun from the East,
O, Turlough MacSweeney!

Play as they played in that rapturous hour
When the clans heard in gladness his young fiery
call
Who burst from the gloom of the Sassenach tower,
And sped to the welcome in dear Donegal,
Then on to his hailing as chieftain of all—
O, Turlough MacSweeney !

Play as they played, when, a trumpet of war,
His voice for the rally, pealed up to the blue,
And the kerns from the hills and the glens and the
scaur
Marched after the banner of conquering Hugh—
Led into the fray by a piper like you,
O, Turlough MacSweeney !

And surely no note of such music shall fail,
Wherever the speech of our Eire is heard,
To foster the hope of the passionate Gael,
To fan the old hatred, relentless when stirred,
To strengthen our souls for the strife to be dared,
O, Turlough MacSweeney !

*May your pipes, silver-tongued, clear and sweet in their
crooning,
Keep the magic they captured at dawning and even
From the blackbird at home, and the lark on its journey,
From the thrush on its spray, and the little green linnet.
A health to you, Piper !*

THE LOVE-TALKER.

I met the Love-Talker one eve in the glen,
He was handsomer than any of our handsome
 young men,
His eyes were blacker than the sloe, his voice sweeter
 far
Than the crooning of old Kevin's pipes beyond in
Coolnagar.

I was bound for the milking with a heart fair and free—
My grief! my grief! that bitter hour drained the life
 from me;
I thought him human lover, though his lips on mine
 were cold,
And the breath of death blew keen on me within his
hold.

I know not what way he came, no shadow fell behind,
But all the sighing rushes swayed beneath a fairy wind
The thrush ceased its singing, a mist crept about,
We two clung together—with the world shut out.

Beyond the ghostly mist I could hear my cattle low,
The little cow from Ballina, clean as driven snow,
The dun cow from Kerry, the roan from Inisheer,
Oh, pitiful their calling—and his whispers in my ear!

His eyes were a fire ; his words were a snare ;
 I cried my mother's name, but no help was there ;
 I made the blessed Sign : then he gave a dreary moan,
 A wisp of cloud went floating by, and I stood alone.

Running ever thro' my head is an old-time rune—
 " Who meets the Love-Talker must weave her shroud
 soon."
 My mother's face is furrowed with the salt tears that
 fall,
 But the kind eyes of my father are the saddest sight
 of all.

I have spun the fleecy lint and now my wheel is still,
 The linen length is woven for my shroud fine and chill,
 I shall stretch me on the bed where a happy maid I
 lay—
Pray for the soul of Máire Og at dawning of the day !





PÁISTÍN FIONN:

O, *Páistín Fionn*, but it vexed her sore,
The day you turned from your mother's door
For the wide gray sea, and the strife and din
That lie beyond, where the ships go in.

There was always peace in the little town—
The kindly neighbours went up and down,
With a word to you, and a word to me,
And a helping hand where need might be.

The sheltering hills and the rainbow skies,
Set the dreams alight in your boyish eyes,
And the shrill sweet singing from every brake
Stirred in your heart a restless ache.

So you left our glens, and our fishful streams,
To follow the lure of your boyish dreams:
Through the lonely cities you wander long,
Far from the moors and the blackbird's song.

Has the world been good to you, *Páistín Fionn*
Has the yellow gold that you sought to win
Been worth the toil and the danger dared?
Has plenty blessed you and sorrow spared?

Your mother sits in the dusk alone,
And croons old songs in an undertone,
Old cradle-songs that your childhood knew,
When her folding arms made a world for you.

Her sad heart, loving and hoping on,
Awaits your footsteps from dark to dawn—
The thin cheeks paler and paler grow,
With hunger for you as the hours drift slow.

Then, *Pdistín Fionn*, come back, come back—
A homebound bird o'er the glancing track;
The door is open—the hearth is red—
And our love is calling you, Dear Fair Head.



HANDSOME BRIAN O'GALLAGHER.

(After an Old Song.)

Handsome Brian O'Gallagher, you took my heart away
When you set your foot upon the ship and sailed that
 bitter day,
And in my dreams, both noon and night, I'm sighing
 o'er and o'er,
Handsome Brian O'Gallagher, shall I ever see you more ?

'Tis far and very far your feet have led you all alone,
No friendly faces near you, nor specc that is your own ;
But withered verdure under, and a cruel sun before—
Handsome Brian O'Gallagher, shall I ever see you more ?

Sure travel brings no ease, *a gradh*, but wakens
 memories sweet,
And a keen regret within you for a white hill-climbing
 street ;
For the turf-fire's ruddy flicker, and the kindly open
 door—
Handsome Brian O'Gallagher, shall I ever see you more ?

You must have met the fairies in some shadow-thridden
 glen,
Who shook their Fluttering Wisp at you, again and
 yet again,
And sowed the seed of wandering that keeps me sobbing
 sore—
Handsome Brian O'Gallagher, shall I ever see you more ?

The magic of the Fluttering Wisp has struck your clear
eyes blind,
Since for an unknown world you leave this dearer world
behind;
With its green and purple valleys, its songful woods
go leor—
Handsome Brian O'Gallagher, shall I ever see you more ?

I will pray for you to Patrick, and on Brigid I will call—
(And there's many a holy *toras* to be said in Donegal),
And Colmcille will listen from his throne on Heaven's
floor—
Handsome Brian O'Gallagher, shall I ever see you more ?

Oh ! thinking long 's the weary work; it breaks my
heart from dawn,
Till all the solemn shining stars come out at dayli'gone;
And with the dart of sorrow I am wounded to the core—
Handsome Brian O'Gallagher, shall I ever see you more ?



MARY OF CARRICK.

Mary of Carrick has gone away
From our pleasant places, down to the sea,
She has put a loss on our mountain gray,
She has drained the joy from the heart o' me,

Mary a-stor,

Mary a-stor,

Black hair, black eyes, I am grieving sore!

Mary of Carrick is small and sweet—
My Share of the World, how sweet were you
Tripping along on little bare feet
With your milking-pails through the rainbow dew?

Mary a-stor,

Mary a-stor,

The sun was a shadow with you to the fore!

Mary of Carrick gave only a smile—
No word of comfort for words I spake,
But since she left me, this weary while,
My heart is learning the way to break,

Mary a-stor,

Mary a-stor,

Quick is my learning—and bitter the lore!

Mary of Carrick, 'tis you I must follow,
For where you are 'tis there I must be—
On mountain gray, or in heathery hollow,
Or where the salt wind blows from the sea.

Mary a-stor,

Mary a-stor,

When I find I shall bind you, nor lose evermore!

NIAMH:

Oh, who is she, and what is she?
A beauty born eternally
Of shimmering moonshine, sunset flame,
And rose-red heart of dawn;
None knows the secret ways she came—
Whither she journeys on.

I follow her, I follow her
By haunted pools with dreams astir,
And over blue unwearied tides
Of shadow-waves, where sleep
Old loves, old hates, whose doom derides
Vows we forget to keep

I send my cry, I send my cry
Adown the arches of the sky,
Along the pathway of the stars,
Through quiet and through stress;
I beat against the saffron bars
That guard her loveliness.

And low I hear, oh, low I hear,
Her cruel laughter, fluting clear,
I see far-off the drifted gold
Of wind-blown flying hair;
I stand without in dark and cold
And she is—Where? Where? Where?

ON AN ISLAND.

Weary on ye, sad waves !
Still scourging the lonely shore.
Oh, I am far from my father's door,
And my kindred's graves !

From day to day, outside
There is nothing but dreary sea ;
And at night o'er the dreams of me
The great waters glide.

If I look to east or west,
Green billows go tipped with foam—
Green woods gird my father's home,
With birds in each nest.

The grass is bitter with brine,
Sea-stunted the rushes stir—
In my father's woods the fir
Smells sweeter than wine.

My mother's eyes were kind,
But oh ! kind eyes and smile
That won me to this lone isle,
She is left behind.

For love came like a storm,
Uprooted, and bound me here
In chains more strong, more dear,
Than the old home charm.

• • • • •

Swiftly I thrust away
This thought of the Woods of Truagh,
My poplar, my fir are you,
My larch a-sway—

My mether of full delight,
My sun that is never spent,
And thus I go well-content,
Through gray days in your light.



THE HEATHERY HILL.

I MIND it well, and I see it yet
In a halo of sunset glory,
When I climbed knee-deep through the gorse and fern
To keep my tryst with Rory.
Like a singing-flame the little red lark
Poured the joy of its heart above me;
My grief, my grief! for the Heathery Hill
And the lad that used to love me.

The blue mist eerily drifted down,
Till the kine were lost in shadow,
'Twas time for Rory to come this way
By boreen and dewy meadow.
Then, then a song, that was sweeter far
Than thrush's or lark's, rose near me—
Oh! I'm thinking long for the Heathery Hill
And the voice of my lad to cheer me.

I miss my mother the livelong day—
Sure I was my mother's treasure;
I cry in dreams for my father's fields,
And the city holds no pleasure:
I'd part its ease and its golden store,
Though the wise folk may deride me,
For a summer eve on the Heathery Hill
And the lad o' my heart beside me.



THE SPELL-STRICKEN.

I hung my gift on the hawthorn bush,
Because three sips from the Holy Well
Had hurried the fever out of my veins,
And a pain that no tongue could tell.

And the gift I gave to the good Saint Bride
Was your little kerchief of spotted blue—
Cáilín deas, it had circled your neck,
And was sweet with the warmth of you.

The priest came by as I sat and dreamed
(I dreamed at night and I dreamed at noon),
He laid his kindly hand on my brow—
"Are you hearing a fairy tune?"

"Do you hear them sing as you sit and smile?"
Then he led my steps to the blessed place,
I drank that day from his hollowed palms,
And he prayed, "God give you grace."

No fairy piping had troubled me—
It was you, O girl of the yellow hair!
It was you, bright blossom of loveliness!
Who set for my soul a snare.

Your smile had more than the strength of ten
To draw me after—your frown was worse,
For then I turned to the cup of woe,
And drained to the dregs its curse.

Mary O'Hara, my soul is safe!
I walk with men as a man should walk,
No longer my mother makes her moan
For my idle hours and my foolish talk.

I see you pass in your homespun dress,
Your white throat bare, and your eyelids meek,
But your wonder of beauty is all in vain,
Dark eyes, soft lips, and young round cheek.

Is it in vain? Kind saints be near!
I vow that the tortures of love are fled;
Yet something stirs at yon light foot-fall,
Till I close my ears for dread.

Mary O'Hara, pass on, pass on,
The spell is broken—the captive free,
*Pass on, ere I pillow your yellow head
On my heart where it used to be.*



SLÁINTE NA H-ÉIREANN.

O wind-drifted Branch, lift your head to the sun,
For the sap of new life in your veins hath begun,
And a little young bud of the tenderest green
Mine eyes through the snow and the sorrow have seen!

O little green bud, break and blow into flower,
Break and blow through the welcome of sunshine and
shower ;
'Twas a long night and dreary you hid there forlorn,
But now the cold hills wear the radiance of morn!

And there will be joy in our hearts since you bring
A whisper of Hope and a promise of Spring—
A Spring that is fairer for long waiting years,
And a Hope that is dearer because of our tears.



GLEN MOYLENA.

All the Summer for our loving, with the soft wind
in the wheat !

Ah ! but Autumn brought disaster, speeding far on
deadly feet.

We two kept our tryst that eve ; how you clasped me,
loth to leave

Though the pike men sought their chief in Glen
Moylena.

" Ere I go to meet my doom, Love, one kiss—the best
and last.

Sweet wet eyes, oh, vex me not with haunting
memories of the past.

Make me brave for death, I pray, since I tread a
sterner way

Than the woodbine-scented paths of Glen Moylena.

To the wise moon gleams of steel flashed defiance from
the shade,

Round the hill the red-coats toiled, plunder-laden,
unafraid ;

Then the horror of the meeting, pike and pike sprang
out in greeting—

(Sleep in peace, ye pallid ghosts of Glen Moylena).

" *This* for Eileen, yellow-haired, *this* for dear and dark-eyed Maeve,
This for altar overthrown, *this* for desecrated grave,
Strong and swift for hunger dire, withered mother,
murdered sire"—
Red the heart's-blood tinged each pike in Glen Moylena.

Fighting through the startled night, fighting while the
shy dawn peeps
On stark forms upon the sward, green and red in
ghastly heaps;
Hand to hand in desperate strife, fighting for your
country's life,
Fighting till ye lost the day in Glen Moylena.

Since you came not, *stor mo chroidhe*, through the
gloom I wandered far:
High above in heaven trembled here and there a
frightened star,
I could here the sleuth-hounds bay, tracking sure
their bleeding prey,
Hear the cry of spear-tossed babes in Glen Moylena.

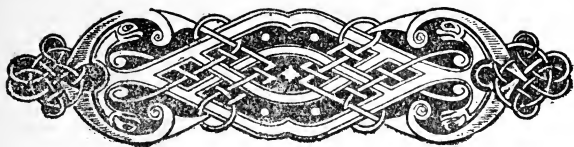
In those awful hours, while Death reaped for harvest
Ireland's best,
By the thorn-crowned rath I stole, where some old
king takes his rest,
Kindly angels mourned with me, when beneath our
trysting-tree,
Cold and wan I found you, love, in Glen Moylena

Brave in life, brave in death, in the foremost ranks you
fell,
With the torn green banner draped round the heart
that loved it well,
Staring with your dead grey eyes to the pitiful wet
skies,
Saddest day of all the days in Glen Moylena!

: : : : :

There's a quiet dell, unknown save to Love and me
alone,
Where the Springtime enters first, and where Sum-
mer holds her throne;
Where I kneel at eve and weep tears that never thrill
your sleep,
Only keep your grave-grass green in Glen Moylena:





THE SAD SONG OF FINIAN:

I was sent adrift on the waves of the world,

Ochón! ochón!

All for the sake of the yellow-curled
Slender girl that I wished my own.

I wandered East and I wandered West,

Ochón! ochón!

And never saw sloe-blossom white as her breast,
Though the heart in under is hard as a stone.

I was scourged by the cruel Red Wind o' the Hills,

Ochón! ochón!

I lay all night in the mist that chills,
And to God and Mary I made my moan.

I saw through the dark her eyes aglow,

Ochón! ochón!

Shadowy, shimmering like the flow
Of running water o'er rock moss-grown.

I saw through the dark the shine of her hair,
 Ochón! ochón!
It floated over and round me there—
A golden web down the silence blown.

I saw through the dark her rowan-hued lips,
 Ochón! ochón!
Her cheek, soft-curving, whose young blush slips
Into the snow 'bove her kerchief shown.

My Star of Knowledge! my Flower of Grace!
 Ochón! ochón!
'Tis she has left me in woeful case,
With empty arms to lament alone.

I wander North and I wander South,
 Ochón! ochón!
In the veins of my heart is a burning drouth,
And love for her tortures my every bone.

I am adrift on the waves of the world—
 Ochón! ochón!
Tossed by the storm, by the green seas whirled,
All for the sake of the yellow-curled
Slender girl that I wished my own.



THE BROWN WIND OF CONNAUGHT.

The brown wind of Connaught—
Across the bogland blown,
(*The brown wind of Connaught*),
Turns 'my heart to a stone;
For it cries my name at twilight,
And cries it at the noon—
O, Mairgreád Bán! O, Mairgreád Bán!
Just like a fairy tune.

The brown wind of Connaught,
When Dermot came to woo,
(*The brown wind of Connaught*),
It heard his whispers too;
And while my wheel goes whirring,
It taps on my window-pane,
Till I open wide to the Dead outside,
And the sea-salt misty rain.

The Brown wind of Connaught
With women wailed one day
(*The brown wind of Connaught*),
For a wreck in Galway Bay;
And many the dark-faced fishers
That gathered their nets in fear,
But one sank straight to the Ghostly Gate—
And he was my Dermot Dear.

The brown wind of Connaught
Still keening in the dawn,
(*The brown wind of Connaught*),
For my true love long gone.
Oh, cold green wave of danger,
Drift him a restful sleep
O'er his young black head on its lowly bed,
While his weary wake I keep.

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THE FOUR PLACES OF SORROW:

There is sorrow for me in the North, where the
black wind blows,
(Hush, O Wind of the dirges, O Voice of the restless
dead !)
The ache of its cruel keening thro' my heart like an
arrow goes,
I see in the tossing waters the sheen of a dear bright
head;

There is sorrow for me in the South, where the white
wind sings,
(Hush, O Wind of all lovers, crooning a laugh and a
cry !)
On the pain of a dream love-haunted breaks the music
of wings,
Seagulls, sweeping and swaying, saw ye my dead drift
by ?

There is sorrow for me in the East, where the red wind
burns,
(Hush, O Wind of remorse, O Wind of the scourging
flame !)
Under its slow cold dawning the soul of the drowned
returns
And wan, in the startled daybreak, a ghost from the
sea he came.

There is sorrow for me in the West, where the brown
wind raves,

(Hush, O Wind from the bogs, O memory-freighted
Wind!)

He is spindrift hither and thither, sport of unweary
waves :

*Would that my heart were close on his heart, my eyes
on his eyes were blind !*



CAROLL O'DALY:

I NEVER dance as in days of yore,
Caroll O'Daly ! Caroll O'Daly !
The banquet hall knows my mirth no more,
My song is silent, my wheel at rest,
My desolate heart hath grief for guest ;
Bran at my feet sits wistful-eyed,
I am too weary to cheer or chide—
And my maidens repine for the joy that was mine,
Caroll, my lover !

The birds still trill at my window, Dear !
Caroll O'Daly ! Caroll O'Daly !
Why are they happy and you not here ?
Once while the thrush sang his lay for us,
His little heart's phantasy tremulous—
On a bough of roses swayed to and fro,
You told me the story I yearned toknow ;
Now the bloom's on the thorn and I wander forlorn,
Caroll, my lover !

To-night of all nights, if you were nigh,
Caroll O'Daly ! Caroll O'Daly !
You and your good steed prancing by ;
Vainly my maids on the marriage dawn,
Might seek the pale bride in bower and bawn,
There would be sorrow and wild surprise,
And flashings of ire in my bridegroom's eyes,
But no succour is near for my grieving and fear,
Caroll, my lover !

They say you have wedded a lady fair,
Caroll O'Daly! Caroll O'Daly!
In that southern land of the perfumed air—
Beauteous as she who Diarmuid wooed
From a perilous court to the solitude;
Gentle as Deirdre, whom poets sing,
And *I* dream and dream that your kisses cling
To my lips grown white for the lost delight,
Caroll, my lover!

: : : . : :

O harper grey, did you ever meet,
Caroll O'Daly! Caroll O'Daly!
In forest glade, or in crowded street,
In banquet chamber, or cloister dim?
Heard you the warring world's praise of him
For chivalrous daring, in danger's face;
For generous spirit and knightly grace,
Or do sighing winds sweep o'er his lonely last sleep?
(Caroll, my lover!)

O harper, chant me your saddest strain!
Caroll O'Daly! Caroll O'Daly!
Cometh no more to soothe my pain.
Sing me of Lir, and the swans that toil
Broken and soul-wrung through waves of Moyle,
Sing of the lovers whose dead hearts grew
Into tall trees of the apple and yew—
While I mourn for my woe and the heavy tears flow,
(Caroll, my lover!)

"*Eibhlín, Eibhlín, Eibhlín a rúin,*
(Caroll O'Daly ! Caroll O'Daly !
This minstrel playeth the old-time tune);
"A hundred thousand welcomings, Sweet,
Thy dear dark eyes from my soul I greet,
Thy rose-red lips and each dusky curl"—
The lights grow dim in a wildering whirl,
And I look on your face from my canopied place,
Caroll, my lover!

"*Eibhlín, Eibhlín, Eibhlín a rúin,*"
Caroll O'Daly ! Caroll O'Daly !
(The clear notes die in a plaintive croon);
"Wilt thou be mine, who hath loved thee long,
Crossed the broad seas lest thou do this wrong,
Dared thy stern sire and his clan for thee—
Pulse of my heart, wilt thou fly with me?"
Through the echoing hall rings your passionate call,
Caroll, my lover!

: . : ; : :

Over the border and far away,
Caroll O'Daly ! Caroll O'Daly !
Your voice as a spell, could I answer 'Nay?'
Let the grim chief seek him another bride,
But into the starlight we ride, we ride,
Your sheltering arm close round me pressed,
And my happy head on your faithful breast,
And before us dew-pearled, the awakening world,
Caroll, my lover!

BEREFT.

I roved last night from dusk to dawn lamenting
 all forlorn,
And stept upon a ring of green beneath a twisted
 thorn,
The cruel Red Wind o' the Hills came blowing round
 about—
I heard the clash of fairy swords and the fairies' battle
 shout.

My eyes were open to the dark, I stood in silent fear,
And saw one move among them was gone from me a
 year,
Her nut-brown curls so fine and free, her slender shape
 I knew—
Christ keep us from such sorrow as filled her eyes of
 blue.

The Gentle Folk were warring for sake of my fair
 girl—
Their strokes had set the wind to blow and dead brown
 leaves to whirl.
She saw me, and her little hands were lifted in despair,
Mo bhron! mo bhron! when next I looked nor *Sidhe*
 nor ghost was there.

Had I but called on Christ's dear Name and made the
 holy Sign,
Sweet Una would have safely lain within these arms of
 mine—
But frozen was my voice with awe that proved my
 courage vain,
Else I had dared the fairy foe and won my dear again.

Oh, I will wander to the east, and I will wander west,
And dree my penance in the ways that Patrick's feet
 have blessed,
And maybe where she bides unseen in fairy field or
 hall,
The blessing of my whispered prayer upon her head
 may fall.

If in that hour the bonds should break and her sad
 soul go free
To take the lonely road of death and come no more
 to me,
I only ask one gift from God—one joy for joys
 denied—
When Una walks the road of death that I may walk
 beside.





MO BHUACHAILL CAEL-DUBH:

(My Black Slender Boy).

My Black Slender Boy, as you step on your way
To the dewy-wet fields at the dawning of day ;
My heart in my dreams hears the ring of your shoe,
And roams in the dawn through the clover with you.

My Black Slender Boy !—on my father's grass browse
Of sheep a full hundred, and twenty fine cows,
And my mother has webs of blue woollen *go leor*,
And linen and gold for my fortune, *a stor*.

My Black Slender Boy, you have nothing but health—
Yet your diamonds of eyes are far rarer than wealth ;
Your mouth of white pearls, and your locks of the jet
Would buy all my fortune and leave me in debt.

My Black Slender Boy, though my father may frown,
And my proud mother pass you with scorn in the town,
While they bargain at making a match for me there,
With Red Ulic Keown in the heat of the fair—

I love you the more, Love, because of their hate,
If you whispered me 'Come,' I would fly to you
straight,
Ay, over the bog to you, jewel of mine—
And leave them their pride, and their gold, and their
kine.

But what can a poor colleen do till you speak?
With your hand in my hand, and your kiss on my
cheek,
I would wander the world with you, singing for joy,
My store-house of treasure, my Black Slender Boy.



NIAL O'CAHAN:

Oh, when my Knight rode forth at morn,
The blue hills shone, sun-kissed, afar ;
Oh, when my Knight was homeward borne,
Over him glittered the first pale star.

Raise the dirge for the bravest chief !
Foremost in danger on battle plain :
Deaf, oh deaf, is he to my grief—
Raise the dirge for Nial O'Cahan.

Little he dreamt of a death-blow then,
With his hounds high-leaping around his knee ;
Bound for the shady green woods of Prehen,
The hunting-band was a sight to see.

I waved my scarf from Dungiven's tower,
He turned in his stirrup to doff again
The white-plumed cap—in his manhood's flower,
Raise the dirge for Nial O'Cahan.

Could my curses wither your base, black brood,
I would curse you, Donal, from dawn till dark,
For you sought him by stealth in the ferny wood,
And he lay on the blue-bells still and stark.

He who had stood through your childhood lone
Your strong, bright shield against woe and pain,
The viper he cherished and loved for his own
Bit to the heart's core of Nial O'Cahan.

Home by Glen Dermot his clansmen stepped,
With solemn pacing, beneath the pall.
What was the quarry so wildly bewept
And laid at my feet in the castle hall?

Hark! they are digging his narrow grave,
And your red hand, Donal, shall keep its stain,
Though all the waters of Foyle should lave,
For the doom you dealt to Nial O'Cahan.

Pray, oh Priest, by your altar stone,
That his soul may look on God's Face to-night,
Raise, oh Keeners, the shrill *Ochón*,
For my lord, who fell in no hard-fought fight.

Raise the dirge for the generous chief
Whose dead hand dropped from the slackening
rein,
Deaf forever is he to my grief—
Raise the dirge for Nial O'Cahan:



ALL SOUL'S NIGHT:

Mhuire a's truagh! Mhuire a's truagh!
A foot went by in the night,
A swift foot that I knew,
And I saw in the chill moonlight
A golden ghostly head—
O my Love long dead!

Mhuire a's truagh! Mhuire a's truagh!
Is it colder yet in the clay,
Since the wandering's come on you
'Twixt the dark and the day;
Now the frost's on the window-pane
And you come to my door again?

Mhuire a's truagh! Mhuire a's truagh!
Do you bring me the word at last
That the waiting hours are through
And my loneliness is past?
That after the joy denied
I may rest satisfied.

Mhuire a's truagh! Mhuire a's truagh!
'Twill be sweet to sleep in the sod,
With the singing lark in the blue,
Under the smile of God;
So that a grave we share
Together, Heart's Dearest, there.



OUR ROAD.

Here is the road that you must climb with me,
This road that winds between the hill and sea,
And leads to where our quiet home shall be.

Love waits us there—not proud, nor kingly clad,
Oh! just a little joyous country lad,
With tender wiles to make our tired hearts glad.

No barbéd arrow doth he hold for us—
But outstretched hands, divine and generous.
Would all sad wayfarers were welcomed thus!

The world hath tortured—yet immense our gain
To find enduring peace around us twain,
I, weary of my wanderings, you of your disdain.



BRIAN BOY MAGEE:

(A.D. 1641.)

I am Brian Boy Magee—
My father was Eoghain Bán—
I was wakened from happy dreams
By the shouts of my startled clan ;
And I saw through the leaping glare
That marked where our homestead stood,
My mother swing by her hair—
And my brothers lie in their blood.

In the creepy cold of the night
The pitiless wolves came down—
Scotch troops from that Castle grim
Guarding Knockfergus Town ;
And they hacked and lashed and hewed
With musket and rope and sword,
Till my murdered kin lay thick
In pools by the Slaughter Ford.

I fought by my father's side,
And when we were fighting sore
We saw a line of their steel
With our shrieking women before ;
The red-coats drove them on
To the verge of the Gobbins gray,
Hurried them—God ! the sight !
As the sea foamed up for its prey.

Oh, tall were the Gobbins cliffs,
And sharp were the rocks, my woe!
And tender the limbs that met
Such terrible death below;
Mother and babe and maid
They clutched at the empty air,
With eyeballs widened in fright,
That hour of despair.

(Sleep soft in your heaving bed,
O little fair love of my heart!
The bitter oath I have sworn
Shall be of my life a part;
And for every piteous prayer
You prayed on your way to die,
May I hear an enemy plead
While I laugh and deny).

In the dawn that was gold and red,
Ay, red as the blood-choked stream,
I crept to the perilous brink—
Great Christ! was the night a dream?
In all the Island of Gloom
I only had life that day—
Death covered the green hill-sides,
And tossed in the Bay:

I have vowed by the pride of my sires—
By my mother's wandering ghost—
By my kinsfolk's shattered bones
Hurled on the cruel coast—
By the sweet dead face of my love,
And the wound in her gentle breast—
To follow that murderous band,
A sleuth-hound who knows no rest

I shall go to Phelim O'Neill
With my sorrowful tale, and crave
A blue-bright blade of Spain,
In the ranks of his soldiers brave.
And God grant me the strength to wield
That shining avenger well—
When the Gael shall sweep his foe
Through the yawning gates of Hell.

I am Brian Boy Magee !
And my creed is a creed of hate ;
Love, Peace, I have cast aside—
But Vengeance, *Vengeance*, I wait !
Till I pay back the four-fold debt
For the horrors I witnessed there,
When my brothers moaned in their blood,
And my mother swung by her hair.



THE PRINCES OF THE NORTH.

Summer and winter the long years have flown
Since you looked your last for ever on the hills of
Tyrone ;
On the vales of Tyrconnell, on the faces strained that
night
To watch you, Hugh and Rory, over waves in your
flight.

Not in Uladh of your kindred your bed hath been
made,
Where the holy earth haps them and the quicken-tree
gives shade ;
But your dust lies afar, where Rome hath given space
To the tanist of O'Donnell, and the Prince of Nial's
race.

O, sad in green Tyrone when you left us, Hugh O'Neill,
In our grief and bitter need, to the spoiler's cruel steel ?
And sad in Donegal when you went, O'Rory *Bán*,
From your father's rugged towers and the wailing of
your clan.

Our hearts had bled to hear of that dastard deed in
Spain ;
We wept our Eaglet, in his pride, by Saxon vileness
slain ;
And, girded for revenge, we waited but the call of war
To bring us like a headlong wave from heathery height
and scaur.

Ochón and *ochón!* when the tidings travelled forth
That our chiefs had sailed in sorrow from the glens
of the North ;

Ochón and *ochón!* how our souls grew sore afraid,
And our love followed after in the track your keel had
made !

And yet in green Tyrone they keep your memory still,
And tell you never fled afar, but sleep in Aileach Hill—
In stony sleep, with sword in hand and stony steed
beside,
Until the horn shall waken you—the rock gate open
wide.

Will you come again, O Hugh, in all your olden power
In all the strength and skill we knew, with Rory, in
that hour
When the Sword leaps from its scabbard, and the
Night hath passed away,
And Banbha's battle-cry rings loud at Dawning of the
Day.



DONAL MAC SEAGHAIN NA MALLACHT.

(Donal Mac Shan of the Curses, took the garrison of Liscallaghan, October 23rd, 1641.)

“ Donal Mac Seaghain Na Mallacht
Sign the cross on your lips and breast
Before you go into the battle
Where, maybe, you'll find your rest.

“ And sign it on brow of blackness :
Loved vein of my heart, my son,
That the bitter hate may leave you,
And the bitter words be done.

“ For a grief is ever with me—
Dark sorrow without shine—
That Donal Mac Seaghain of the Curses
Should be name on son of mine.”

He took the hands of his mother
And answered in gentle wise,
Though his face was a cloud of anger,
And a quenchless flame his eyes.

“ For you I have only loving
Who nursed me upon your knee :
Yet, O Mother, you cannot sweeten
The sights that to-day I see.

"I look on our smoking valleys,
I gaze on our wasted lands,
I stand by our grass-grown thresholds
And curse their ruffian hands. .

"I curse them in dark and daylight—
I curse them the hours between
The gray dawn and shadowy night time,
For the sights my eyes have seen.

"I curse them awake or sleeping,
I curse them alive or dead,
And, Oh Christ ! that my words were embers
To fall on each Saxon head.

"They have swept my land with their fury,
It is burnt where their feet have passed :
It is blighted, dishonoured, lowly
In the track of the poisonous blast.

'But Eoghan, God shield him, gathers
The tall spears of the Gael—
And Donal Mac Seaghain Na Mallacht
Goes foremost to win or fail.

"Then stay me not of my curses—
When mountain and fair green glen
Are free as the Lord God meant them,
I shall pray at your bidding then."





HILLS O' MY HEART.

Hills o' my heart!

I have come to you at calling of my one love and only,
I have left behind the cruel scarlet wind of the east,
The hearth of my fathers wanting me is lonely,
And empty is the place I filled at gathering of the feast.

Hills o' my heart!

You have cradled him I love in your green quiet hollows,
Your wavering winds have hushed him to soft forgetful
sleep,
Below dusk boughs where bird-voice after bird-voice
follows
In shafts of silver melody that split the hearkening
deep.

Hills o' my heart!

Let the herdsman who walks in your high haunted
places
Give him strength and courage, and weave his dreams
always,
Let your cairn-heaped hero-dead reveal their grand
exultant faces,
And the Gentle Folk be good to him betwixt the dark
and day.

Hills o' my heart!

And I would the Green Harper might wake his soul
to singing,
With music of the golden wires heard when the world
was new,
That from his lips an echo of its sweetness may come
ringing,
A song of pure and noble hopes—a song of all things
true.

Hills o' my heart!

For sake of the yellow head that drew me wandering
over,
Your misty crests from my own home where sorrow
bided then,
I set my seven blessings on your kindly heather cover,
On every starry moorland loch, and every shadowy
glen.

Hills o' my heart!



AT THE WELL OF THE BRANCHY TREES.

At the Well of the Branchy Trees, I lay awhile to rest,
Then God's hand shook the trouble down upon my
 breast,
For the girl I had never seen except in dreams came by,
And now my nights are sleepless grief, my days a sigh.

She is Mary of the Curls—the swan-white modest maid,
Grey pools of quiet are her eyes, like waters in the shade,
She moves as softly through the world as any whispered
 prayer,
And where she steps, the blossoms rise, and song haunts
 the air.

*O Heartbreaker, will you come where my hut stands lone?
I will build you of my true love a jewelled throne,
I will rear for you a palace of fancies fine,
And my dreams shall weave a crown for you, when you
 are mine.*

O Heartbreaker, I have neither red gold nor lands!
My only wealth is youth and strength, and willing hands.
But you would find a shelter from every hurting ill,
Beneath the roof I call my own in Lissadill.

It is there the curlew cries on a circling wing,
The heather-bleat croons wistfully, the brown larks sing
The mournful restless peewit has a constant fear,
And the lake-water laps at the sedge's spear.

The honeysuckle twists with the tangled briar,
The gorse sweeps across the moor in floods of fire,
And the little snowy blossoms of the ceanabhan a-blow
Wave welcome from the bog-land along the ways I go.

I am as a shivering rush in the wind of your scorn
You shed sweet pity on the sad, yet leave me forlorn,
My woe! for the peace I knew, the careless ease,
Ere God gave me sorrow under the Branchy Trees.



INVOCATION.

The steeds of the Black Wind race
Frost-shod and fleet,
Where you hide from my love your face,
And stay your feet :
In this rose-rimmed quiet glen
I bide, and pray
Through the star-filled gloom, and the day,
For your voice again.

The flames on my hearth leap red,
Each a slender spear,
My bosom awaits your head,
And to charm your ear
I have wonder-tales without end,
Fond words untold,
Or the spell of a harp of gold,
As your wild moods tend.

Oh strong man ! man of my love !
With eyes of dreams,
Pools of the dusk where move
No starry gleams :
Come from your storm-girt tower,
Come to my side,
And sweetly your sheath of pride
Shall break into flower.

When the arrow ends its flight
You will lonely grow
For a woman's kiss in the night,
And her breast of snow :
You will reach your arms to the Dark,
And call and cry,
As the wingéd winds sweep by—
But no ear shall hark.



I-BREASIL.

There is a way I am fain to go—
To the mystical land where all are young;
Where the silver branches have buds of snow,
And every leaf is a singing tongue.

It lies beyond the night and day,
Over shadowy hill, and moorland wide,
And whoso enters casts care away,
And wistful longings unsatisfied.

There are sweet white women, a radiant throng,
Swaying like flowers in a scented wind:
But between us the veil of earth is strong,
And my eyes to their luring eyes are blind.

A blossom of fire is each beauteous bird,
Scarlet and gold on melodious wings,
And never so haunting a strain was heard
From royal harp in the Hall of Kings.

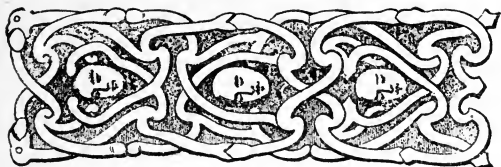
The sacred trees stand in rainbow dew,
Apple and ash and the twisted thorn,
Quicken and holly and dusky yew,
Ancient ere ever gray Time was born

The oak spreads mighty beneath the sun
In a wonderful dazzle of moonlight green—
O would I might hasten from tasks undone,
And journey whither no grief hath been!

Were I past the mountains of opal flame,
I would seek a couch of the king-fern brown,
And when from its seed glad slumber came,
A flock of rare dreams would flutter down.

But I move without in an endless fret,
While somewhere beyond earth's brink, afar,
Forgotten of men, in a rose-rim set,
I-Breasil shines like a beckoning star.





THE CURSE OF MORA.

The fretted fires of Mora
Blew 'gainst him in the night,
He thrills no more at loving,
Nor weeps for lost delight,
For when those flames have bitten
Both joy and grief take flight.

Around his path the shadows
Stalk ever grim and high :
Spears flash in hands long withered,
And dented shields give cry ;
Or misty woman-faces
Laugh out, and pass him by.

He hath the curse of Mora—
Yet blessed of all is he
Whose dew-wet eyes uplifted
See what we fain would see—
One crowned with scarlet berries
Of the sacred quicken tree.

He hears the wild Green Harper
Chant sweet a fairy rune,
And through the sleeping-silence
His feet must track the tune
When the world is barred and speckled
With silver of the moon.

Thus is he doomed till Judgment—
Although the cairn should hold
His fevered heart in quiet,
And hide his hair of gold,
His soul shall wander seeking,
And its quest be never told.



THINKIN' LONG.

Oh thinkin' long 's the weary work !
It breaks my heart from dawn
Till all the wee, wee, friendly stars
Come out at dayli'gone.
An' thinkin' long's the weary work,
When I must spin and spin,
To drive the fearsome fancies out,
An' hold the hopeful in !

Ah, sure my lad is far away !
My lad who left our glen
When from the soul of Ireland came
A call for fightin' men ;
I miss his gray eyes glancin' bright,
I miss his liltin' song,
And that is why, the lonesome day,
I'm always thinkin' long.

May God's kind angels guard him
When the fray is fierce and grim,
And blunt the point of every sword
That turns its hate on him,
Where round the torn yet dear green flag
The brave and lovin' throng—
But the lasses of Glenwherry smile
At me for thinkin' long.

THE CONQUEROR.

She lingered in the greening way—
The kine she tended by her side—
Her hair the swift brown hands untied,
And o'er her gown of humble gray
Fell waves of gold, so exquisite,
So bright, the darksome day was lit.

He had no heart for woman's wiles,
Strong was he, grave, and full of dreams
He came, her hair the sunshine seems,
Her shy, alluring, pleading smiles
Draw the world's beauty from all space,
Into one rose-red wistful face.

Then lo! a shaft of fire sprang high,
A royal, eloquent, white flame
In his calm heart that knew no name
To call the radiant vision by—
His soul stood trembling ere it flew
To greet her soul, awakened too.

He took her slender hand in his,
Yet laid no generous gifts therein,
Her lips she lifted for his kiss—
He dreamt no more of fights to win,
But captive, in Love's power, was raised,
To her height—whom his world dispraised.

MOORLOCH MARY:

Like swords of battle the scythes were plying,
The corn lay low in a yellow rout,
When down the stubble, dew-wet and glinting,
A golden shaft of the sun came out :
It was Moorloch Mary, the slender blossom,
Who smiled on me in the misty morn,
And since that hour I am lost with grieving,
Through sleepless nights, and through days forlorn.

Oh Moorloch lies in a world of heather
Where Mary's little brown feet go bare,
And many a shadowy peak divides us,
Yet I will journey to find her there ;
I will climb the mountains and swim the rivers,
I will travel the crests of the heath, wind-blown,
Her face in my heart like a star I carry,
And it shall guide me unto my own.

When I come at last to my Moorloch Mary,
I will take her little brown hands in mine,
And kiss her lips where the rowans tarry,
And kiss her hair where the sun-rays shine,
And whisper—" *A stoirín*, my heart was haunted
By wistful eyes of the sweetest grey,
That drew it over the hills of Derry—
O Moorloch Mary, bid the wanderer stay."

FEITHFAILGE:

The blue lake of Devenish!

I put my thousand blessings there;
 (*The blue lake of Devenish*)
On shadow waters all a-stir,
And on the wind-blown honeysuckle
Beauty of Feithfailge's hair.

The blue lake of Devenish!

I pray, if God but grant the grace,
 (*The blue lake of Devenish*),
To win that dear enchanted place,
Where spring bides in the apple-blossom,
Beauty of Feithfailge's face.

The blue lake of Devenish!

I vex the purple dark with sighs—
 (*The blue lake of Devenish*)
Across the world my sorrow flies,
A-hunger for the gray and wistful
Beauty of Feithfailge's eyes.

The blue lake of Devenish!

I wander far, yet find no rest—
 (*The blue lake of Devenish*)
Sore-haunted ever, and oppressed
By dreams that pillow on the snow-white
Beauty of Feithfailge's breast.

The blue lake of Devenish,
She walks there in the quiet, meet
(The blue lake of Devenish)
For prayerful thoughts, and visions sweet,
And cool green grasses kiss the lightsome
Beauty of Feithfailge's feet.

The blue lake of Devenish,
I would the red gold were my part,
(The blue lake of Devenish)
Ripe fields, and herds upon Drimart,
That by my fire might shine the lovelit
Beauty of Feithfailge's heart.



THE WAYFARER:

He had no crown upon his head
When first he met me by the way,
His feet upon the thorns had bled,
His gown was hodden gray :
But in his eyes, stars, moon, and sun,
Were one.

He came, his empty hands outheld,
I gave to him with glad good-will :
And since my pitying heart rebelled
That he should fare so ill,
I took his gold head to my breast
For rest.

Then lo ! his empty hands were piled
With all gifts craved in dreams of mine,
And over me the pilgrim-child
Spilled benefits divine :
Joy, Heart's Desire, and Peace most fair,
Fell there.

For my great pity in his stress
Because that sad and bare he went,
I now am clad with happiness,
And rich in sweet content :
'Twas Love, the King, who crossed my way
To-day.

THE OTHER:

I am the Other—I who come
To heal the wound she gave,
The wound that struck your fond words dumb,
And left your world a grave.

What though you loved her—I love you,
And so the most is said,
Here is my yearning heart, still true
To yours her frailty bled.

(But oh! the bitter grief that I
Kept hushed, the wild despair,
When your dear eyes had passed me by
To find her face so fair.)

Now she hath gone her cruel way,
And I am come again,
To search among the husks to-day
For one sweet golden grain.

Because in me Love's strength is great,
Too great for pride, or sin,
I knock upon your heart's barred gate,
And pray you let me in.



THE QUEST.

I bared my heart to the winds and my cry went after
 you—
A brown west wind blew past and the east my secret
 knew,
A red east wind blew far to the lonesome bogland's
 edge,
And the little pools stirred sighing within their girthing
 sedge.

The north wind hurled it south—the black north
 wind of grief—
And the white south wind came crooning through
 every frozen leaf;
Yet never a woe of mine, blown wide down starlit
 space,
Hath quickened the pulse of your heart, or shadowed
 your rose-red face.

I reach my arms to the Dawn and call your name—
 your name,
O Sweet, whom I seek untiring, are you core of the
 gold-green flame?
Are you the gate of the sun? Are you life in the
 opening flower?
Since the garnered beauty of earth God lavished on
 you for dower.

The moon-gold web of your hair is a mesh that I cannot
break,
In the shadowy wells of your eyes I stoop Love's thirst
to slake,
And find the water as bitter as Death's unwelcome
cup—
Still, slave to your wordless bidding, I quaff the
bitter up.

I see you in foam of the waves, and clasp it with
passionate hands—
Yet ever it vanishes, soundless, and vague as a dream,
in the sands,
Are you, too, a dream, O Heartbreaker?—shall I greet
you some day or some night
To know you for Sorrow eternal, or the star of
unending Delight?



THE EYES OF FIONUALA.

Dawn Eyes!

Sending swift silver spears of beauty through
The grey mists of my life—a world of sighs
Until, that hour of hours, I met with you.

Sun Eyes!

Glowing and glad, a flame of pure delight,
Fanning the spirals of Love's fire to rise
Within me, and attain your holy height.

Moon Eyes!

Shadow and shine fall from you sweet and cool,
A shimmer of rainbow peace that softly lies
In blessing on my heart's unquiet pool.

Star Eyes!

Steady and golden, smile on me, nor will
Thy tender light to leave my storm-blown skies,
But be my sentinel of Heaven still.



AFTER.

Now that the gates are shut on all I cherished,
O wistful Love, I pray,
Blow no more haunting scents of roses perished,
About my lonely way.

Take from me memory of happy laughter,
Of kisses more than kind:
And that I may not meet his eyes hereafter,
I pray thee strike me blind.

Lest I should knock against the bars, and, bleeding,
Cry to him, faithless—"Come!"
The while he passes by my grief, unheeding,
I pray thee strike me dumb.

So it were best. And dumb and blind, forgetting,
White peace may wrap my soul;
Till, lorn of love and hate, and unregretting,
It passes to its goal.





MY PRAYER.

Set your love before me as a shield !

That, whistling by, the shadowy, wounding spear
Of the world's hate may seek my heart in vain,
Where on your breast it nestles—half in fear
Of the divine sweet silence round us twain—
Set your love before me as a shield !

Set your love before me as a light !

A candle tall ; so shall I, weak, prevail
O'er darkness ; pass beyond all venom'd things
Into the endless Dawn, gold-starred, rose-pale,
And murmurous with whirring silver wings—
Set your love before me as a light !

Set your love before me as a cloud !

A cloud of rainbow mist, where Grief discerns
The radiant face of Joy, and groweth glad :
And Joy, remembering how God's Angel turns
The Wheel of Life, hath pity for the sad—
Set your love before me as a cloud !

Set your love about me as a sea!
Encompassing—whose white and cooling wave
Brings peace—or should at times your soul desire,
To prove my spirit's fervour, then I crave
Love's baptism in deeps of strengthening fire—
Set your love about me as a sea!

Set your love upon me as a prayer!
A benison so softly breathed that none
But God and you and I the words may guess—
Whisper it down the quiet, Dearest One,
The while I reach my lips for your caress—
Set your love upon me as a prayer!



TO THE COMELY FOUR OF ARAN.

I send my prayer upon
The winds that chase the sun,
O Four who are most comely and renowned !
Conal the Wanderer,
And Brendan grave, of Birr,
Furse, and Berchain of this holy ground.

Keep you my treasure safe
From sorrow and from chafe ;
From the strange deadly things that haunt the world
When dark lies, dewy-cool ;
From rush-fringed bogland pool ;
And from the storm-whipped sea's green snare upcurled

O when his weary feet
Journeyed through snow and sleet
On high bald mountains where the way was lone,
My prayers went as a light
Before him in the night,
And Christ, the Kind, was kindly to my own.

He is my secret love,
O Four who sit above !
To you I whisper all my hungering heart
He is my dear desire,
My soul's red altar-fire,
And, bitter woe ! too long are we apart,

By Oghil Well in gray
Mist ere the dawn of day,
I knelt for sake of him and cried to you,
And made my hands a cup,
And drank the white wave up,
The three keen draughts that chilled me through and
through.

His bright head be your care,
O tender Saints and fair!
Be you his mantle in the dew and rain,
His shelter from the cold,
The staff within his hold,
And mine the grieving be, the cold, the pain.



RODY M'CORLEY:

Ho! see the fleet-foot hosts of men
Who speed with faces wan,
From farmstead and from fisher's cot
Upon the banks of Bann!
They come with vengeance in their eyes—
Too late, too late are they—
For Rody M'Corley goes to die
On the Bridge of Toome to-day.

Oh Ireland, Mother Ireland,
You love them still the best,
The fearless brave who fighting fall
Upon your hapless breast;
But never a one of all your dead
More bravely fell in fray,
Than he who marches to his fate
On the Bridge of Toome to-day.

Up the narrow street he stepped,
Smiling and proud and young;
About the hemp-rope on his neck
The golden ringlets clung.
There's never a tear in the blue, blue eyes,
Both glad and bright are they—
As Rody M'Corley goes to die
On the Bridge of Toome to-day.

Ah! when he last stepped up that street,
His shining pike in hand,
Behind him marched in grim array
A stalwart earnest band!
For Antrim town! for Antrim town!
He led them to the fray—
And Rody M'Corley goes to die
On the Bridge of Toome to-day.

The grey coat and its sash of green
Were brave and stainless then;
A banner flashed beneath the sun
Over the marching men—
The coat hath many a rent this noon,
The sash is torn away,
And Rody M'Corley goes to die
On the Bridge of Toome to-day.

Oh, how his pike flashed to the sun!
Then found a foeman's heart!
Through furious fight, and heavy odds,
He bore a true man's part;
And many a red-coat bit the dust
Before his keen pike-play—
But Rody M'Corley goes to die
On the Bridge of Toome to-day.

Because he loved the Motherland,
Because he loved the Green,
He goes to meet the martyr's fate
With proud and joyous mien,
True to the last, true to the last,
He treads the upward way—
Young Rody M'Corley goes to die
On the Bridge of Toome to-day.

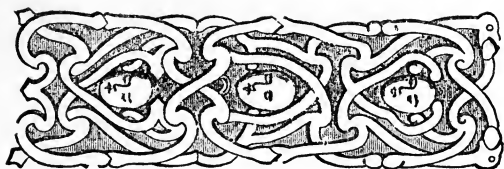
THE WONDER-MUSIC.

I would play you the music of mourning!
And put you to grieving, oh dear love and fair,
Till you droop your young head of the shadowy hair,
And the round rainbow tears come a-trembling and
 fall,
For a sorrow of sorrows that broods over all—
For a cruel pain burning.

I would play you the music of laughter!
And set the smiles lighting your apple-bloom face,
In little glad ripples that gather apace
As if the lone hush of lake-waters were stirred
In a wind from the swift sweeping wing of a bird,
Who trails the breeze after.

I would play you the music of sleeping!
And close the white lips over gray wistful eyes,
And bring the rare dreams in a troop from the skies,
And the dreams I should choose for you, pulse of my
 heart,
Are the sweet and the secret for love kept apart—
My love in your keeping.





A GLEN SONG:

*There's a green glen in Eirinn,
A green glen in Eirinn!*

Do you remember yet, *a gradh*, the sunshine of that
day,
How the the river ran before us, and the fleckless blue
hung o'er us,
And against the purple heather gleamed the yellow of
the hay?

*There's a green glen in Eirinn,
A green glen in Eirinn!*

Where on a dew-wet swinging spray brown throstles
trilled above,
And the blackbird carolled after in a silver rain
of laughter,
And the little linnet piped its song that has no theme
but Love.

*There's a green glen in Eirinn,
A green glen in Eirinn!*

'Twas sweet with you beside me in a world of harvest
gold:
The sallaghs made a shadow in a corner of the meadow,
And your eyes were wells of kindness, and my hand
lay in your hold.

There's a green glen in Eirinn,

A green glen in Eirinn!

The voice of Spring comes on the winds like cuckoo
calling clear,

She bids us fare together, nor heed the fitful weather—
And seek in yon green glen the joy that waits our hearts,
my Dear.



THE KISSES OF ANGUS:

The kisses of Angus came to me—
And three bright birds on my apple-tree
Pipe their magical haunting song
That shall fill with dreaming my whole life long.

The first bird sings of my love's shut eyes,
The second her lips where silence lies,
The third her blushes for ever fled,
And the plenteous curls of her radiant head.

Night and day, asleep or awake,
I carry a heart nigh fit to break,
I carry a pain I shall not forget
Until above me the cairn is set.

For Angus the Druid sent them forth—
These birds that fly to the South and North;
Three kisses he blew on a fateful wind—
These three bright birds for our grief designed.

He bade them circle green Eri round,
Wherever a love-lorn youth be found,
From the High-King's son in his torque of gold,
To the shepherd guarding his master's fold.

He bade them sting like the honey-bee,
In the bitter-sweet of their minstrelsy ;
Or soothe as soft as a mother's croon
When her tired babe droops to the drowsy tune.

He bade them foster the wild unrest
That burns like flame in a lover's breast,
Or haunt the sad from a burial-place
With the pale content of a ghostly face.

Mo bhrón ! mo bhrón ! my lady's sleep
Under the bracken is cold and deep ;
At head and at foot stands an ogham-stone,
Where my carved lament on each slab is shown.

Why doth the young god hurl his ire
At a lover bereft of his soul's Desire ?
My heart goes withering in the sun—
And mirth hath forsaken my father's *dún*.

It is Sorrow's raven I fain would see !
O Angus, call the bright birds from me !
To happier lovers who love may win—
For the hill-fern foldeth my dear one in.



NEECE THE RAPPAREE.

(1720.)

Saw ye Neece O'Hagan,
By Moylena's Banks,
With his matchlock in his hand,
Foam on Rory's flanks?
Child dear! child dear!
'Twixt the night and day,
Neece will come with all his men
And carry you away.

If you do not shut your eyes
And sleep, *mo paistín fionn*,
If you do not keep the sighs
Locked your lips within,
When your cradle-song I sing,
Hushing to and fro—
Neece will knock at mother's door,
And off my Dear must go.

He will take you to his cave
Far down the Glen,
You will miss your mother's arms
Among the roving men.
Whisht, whisht, *a-stor mo chroidhe*,
Closer, closer creep—
O Neece, go by nor stop to-night.
For my Dear's asleep.

Did I catch a blink o' blue ?
Did a whisper stir ?
Nay, 'twas but a deeper note
In *pusheen's* gentle purr ;
And a little sleeping boy
On his mother's knee,
Walks with angels in his dreams,
Nor fears the Rapparee.



VEIN O' MY HEART:

Vein o' my heart, can you hear me crying,
Over the salt dividing sea?
Maybe you'll think 'tis the wind that's sighing—
But it comes from the heart o' me,
The heart o' me!

Oh, that happy day, and your face before me!
The blue loch lay like a silver sheet,
A blackbird swayed to its own sweet story,
And a thrush sang in the wheat.

Around us both was the radiant weather,
Over us both a blue, blue sky;
And the singing stream and the purpling heather,
Gave no thought of a sad good-bye.

Your kind eyes smiled, and your hand was near me,
Warm to hold, and strong and true,
And your words so sweet, yet so brave to cheer me,
Swelled my heart with the love of you.

Vein o' my heart, can you hear me crying,
Over the salt dividing sea?
Maybe you'll think 'tis the wind that's sighing—
But it comes from the heart o' me,
The heart o' me!



MY YELLOW YORLIN.

I would build myself a nest, a little downy nest,
And a warbler of the woodland I would wed—
Oh, not the blackbird bold, nor the thrush with voice
 so cold,
But the Yorlin with the yellow on his head.

I would keep him safe and warm, I would screen him
 from the storm;
Together we would greet the golden sun—
We would mount the greenening stair of the slender larch
 and fir,
And sing our love until the day be done.

Should he journey far away I would watch both night
 and day,
I would call upon the seas to go asleep,
And to be a floor of glass, that my wandering love might
 pass,
Nor fear the curly snares of the deep.

Oh, my Yellow-Yorlin dear, I should ever go in fear
Of the Little Folk who dance beneath the moon:
They would steal you from my side to mate a fairy bride,
And cage my darling Yorlin in the *dún*.

But I know a way to take to a secret lonely lake
Where scented groves above the waters sway;
And I know a secret tree for my Heart's Desire and me,
Where we'll live and love, forever and a day.

THE REASON WHY

Because you brought the hills to me—
The dear hills I had never seen,
All sweet with heather down the braes,
And golden gorse between—

Where sings the blackbird in the dawn,
And where the blue lake-water stirs,
And where the slender wind-blown sedge
Shakes all its silver spurs.

Because you loved the country ways,
Whereon your happy feet were set.
Nor was the calmness of your days,
Stirred by one vexed regret.

But in your every homely word
I heard my unknown kinsfolk call
My roving heart to find its nest
Afar in Donegal.



ON INISHEER.

On Inisheer, on Inisheer,
In the Spring-tide of the year,
You sought me, in your eyes love's rapture burning ;
And for the words you said,
Above my drooping head,
My heart flew to you on the wings of yearning.

On Inisheer, on Inisheer,
I had never known a fear,
Nor a sorrow, nor a sigh to mar my laughter ;
Until that saddest day,
When my true love sailed away,
And the sun grew dim, and darkness followed after.

Why did you go, oh love,
Ere the primrose peeped above
The scanty grass bleached with the wind salt-bitter ?
Here, by a cabin fire,
Each with our heart's desire,
Had not the peace of home for us been fitter ?

Than you to pine afar
Under the Southern Star,
And I to pine by Keevin's ruined altar,
Watching the cliffs of Clare
Fade in the evening air,
Telling my beads for you in tones that falter ;

Or by the holy well,
Where as the darkness fell,
And out of dark the tender dawn came flowing
In seas of silver light,
You prayed the livelong night
That Christ would bless and guard you in your going.

Some day He keeps in store
You will return, *a-stor*,
Your curragh down our foaming current speeding
From the welcome of your clan,
On the rocks of Inishmaan,
To heal my wound of longing, ever bleeding:

On Inisheer, on Inisheer,
Love, I shall wait you here,
My radiant web of dreams through grey hours weaving,
Until, the red gold won,
And all your wandering done,
You take me to your heart and end my grieving.



MÁIRÍN-NÍ-CULLINÁN.

(IRELAND'S LAMENT FOR LORD EDWARD.)

Underneath the shrouding stone,
Where you lie in Death alone,
Can you hear me calling, calling,
In a wild hot gush of woe?
'Tis for you my tears are falling—
For you *mo Chraoibhín Cno!*

When you stood up in the Green
As beseemed the Geraldine,
Slender sword a-glancing, glancing,
Over you the tender skies,
How the warrior-joy kept dancing
In your brave bright eyes.

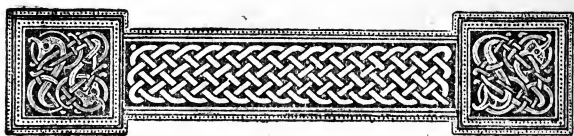
"'Stor," I said, "*A stor mo chroidhe,*
Hope of Mine and Hope of Me,
Take our honour to your keeping,
Bare your swift blade to the Dawn.
Freedom's voice hath roused from sleeping
Máirín-ni-Cullinán."

So I dreamt the Day had come,
Now your ardent lips are dumb,
And the sword is rusty, rusty,
Through a hundred weary years;
All the winds are blowing gusty
With a storm of tears.

"'Stor," I cry, above your bed,
Where I kneel uncomforted—
"Feel you not the battle-anger,
Shake the Nations of the World?
While amid the stress and clangour,
Still my Flag is furled."

"Were you here, O Geraldine,
This oblivion had not been."
Thus I mourn you, pining, pining,
For the gallant heart long gone,
Whose love was as a true star shining,
To Máirín-ni-Cullinán.





THE GREEN WOODS OF TRUAGH.

In the green woods of Truagh we met without fear,
Your kiss on my lips, and your voice in my ear,
Your tender arms about me, and your eyes glad and
clear—

Ochón, the Green Woods of Truagh!

In the green woods of Truagh the days go on wings,
On every brown branch a gladsome bird sings
And the fragrant amber blossom of the honey-suckle
swings—

Ochón, the Green Woods of Truagh!

In the green woods of Truagh the bracken stands high,
And wells of spring-water in deep hollows lie,
And the red deer is browsing in the cool shadows nigh—

Ochón, the Green Woods of Truagh!

In the green woods of Truagh no sorrow dared stay,
The lark called me early at dawn o' the day,
And o'er my sleep at night pleasant dreams used to
play—

Ochón, the Green Woods of Truagh!

In the green woods of Truagh you wait till I come—
I left home and you for the stranger's far home,
To bring a hoard of yellow gold across the grey foam—
Ochón, the Green Woods of Truagh!

In the green woods of Truagh—if God hears my
prayer—
I shall reach you, O true love, my empty hands there,
For little of the yellow gold has fallen to my share—
Ochón, the Green Woods of Truagh!

In the green woods of Truagh—your heart on my own,
And your bright hair in ringlets across my cheek blown,
Now where in all the wide, wide world, could greater
bliss be known?
Ochón, the Green Woods of Truagh!



HAUNTED.

There was a wild cry in the night
And one went past,
I knew a soul was faring forth
Upon the blast.

I knew it was my little love,
But dared not rise;
My mother held me with her prayers,
And tear-wet eyes.

"Son! Son! 'tis but the banshee's voice."
My grief! I knew
Cold Death had sealed the kissing lips,
And eyes of blue.

I knew she lay a pulseless thing,
A lily slain—
Lights at the feet that never more
Would dance again.

Candles around the yellow head—
And on her breast
Blossoms as wan as her dead cheek
Mine own had pressed.

My anger broke her gentle heart—
Because of me
She went to walk the lonely road
Where shadows be.

And I, crouched thro' that awful night
Without a stir,
Saw shining in the dark, the sweet
Sad face of her.

A chill wind blows about my hair
Where'er I go ;
A weeping voice is in my ear—
A voice I know.

She haunts me and will not depart
For prayer or tear—
Would I were underneath the sod
And she were here !

Then I, being dead, might pity win,
And in God's peace
Old memories would lose their sting,
Old sorrows cease.



ART THE LONELY.

The berried quicken-branches lament in lonely sighs,
Through open doorways of the *dún* a lonely wet wind
cries,
And lonely in the hall he sits with feasting warriors
round,
The harp that lauds his fame in fights hath a lonely
sound,

The press of battle and the clang of striking spears
Set a lonely echo ringing for ever in his ears ;
Amid the hunting-band he goes dream-stricken in the
dawn—
The red deer and the baying hounds seem phantoms
hurrying on.

The speckled salmon, too, darts lonely in the pool,
The swan floats lonely with her brood in shallows cool,
His steeds—the swift and gentle—are lonely in their stall,
The sorrow of his loneliness weighs heavy over all.

For in the house of Tara three shadows share the feast,
Conn sits within the High-King's place, against the East,
And Crionna whispers to his hound some memory of
the chase,
While Connla to the harping turns a joyous listening
face.

Ah, woe ! the cairn is over Conn—his hundred battles
done,
And in his sleeping Crionna lies, hidden from the
sun ;
But on a blue mysterious wave Prince Connla sailed
away,
Nor hath an eye in Éire beheld him since that day.

His yellow hair hath silver stars to crown it now,
And silver blossoms kiss his cheek at bending of the
bough,
And the spell that lays forgetfulness of earth on earthly
things
Blows sweetly down enchanted air from whirring fairy
wings.

: : : : : : :

Yet Art the King waits ever a footfall on the floor,
A radiant form between the carven pillars of his door,
His druids in their praying chant softly Connla's name.
And Crionna's boyish beauty, and Conn's enduring fame.

For sake of these his yearning heart to welcome Death
is fain,
His hand moves idly at the chess ; joy spreads its lure in
vain ;
His grieving gaze is seeking from morn till eventide
The eyes of two who sleep the Sleep, and of one
who never died.



THE LITTLE HEAD OF CURLS.

O Little Head of Curls, you're my temptation—
When you flash before my eyes what can I do?
Were I a King I'd leave my lofty station,
And walk the world *a-stóirín*, after you!
Ay, walk the world, nor envy mortal in it—
But travel gaily while the tempest whirls,
You'd be my Summer and my singing Linnet,
My Treasure-Store—O Little Head of Curls.

O Little Head of Curls, your father's winning,
Red gold to give the *childeen* of his heart,
And your thrifty mother sits above her spinning—
My grief! the wealth that keeps us both apart!
And what have I to offer for their jewel?
Ah, nothing; *caílín deas*, save love of you,
So they scorn me in the fair with glances cruel,
While you coax me with those laughing eyes of blue.

O Little Head of Curls, I'll cross the water,
Since a poor boy has no peace where'er you be—
And maybe then your haughty mother's daughter
Will sometimes have a kindly wish for me.
A-rúin—arúin, is that a tear down falling,
And what is this your trembling sweet lips say?
"Would I break your heart entirely?" No, *mo cháilín*,
So to comfort and console you, Love, I'll stay.



UNFEARING.

I fear not Life, now that your arms are round me,
Now that your heart hath told its tale to mine,
For Love hath rent the web of doubt that bound me,
Where once were mists I see his pure Star shine.

I fear not Death, despite its bitter drinking,
And the sad wrench of parting we must bear,
Since, some time, soul to soul shall leap unshrinking.
Before God's foot-stool, in the glory there.



IN DONEGAL.

I know a purple moorland where a blue loch lies,
Where the lonely plover circles, and the peewit cries,
Oh! do you yet remember that dear day in
September,
The hills and shadowy waters beneath those tender
skies?

Behind the scythes, swift-flashing, a wealth of gold
corn lay,
In every brake a singing voice had some sweet word
to say,
When we took the track together across a world of
heather,
With Joy before us like a star to point the pleasant
way.

* * * * *

In Kerry of the Kings you hear the cuckoo call,
You watch the gorse grow withered and its yellow glory
fall :
Yet may some dream blow o'er you the welcome that's
before you,
Among the wind-swept heather and gray glens of
Donegal.





ANGUS THE LOVER.

I follow the silver spears flung from the hands of dawn.
Through silence, through singing of stars, I journey
on and on :
The scattered fires of the sun, blown wide ere the day
be done,
Scorch me hurrying after the swift white feet of my
fawn.

I am Angus the Lover, I who haste in the track of the
wind,
The tameless tempest before, the dusk of quiet behind,
From the heart of a blue gulf hurled, I rise on the
waves of the world,
Seeking the love that allures, woeful until I find.

The blossom of beauty is she, glad, bright as a shaft of
flame,
A burning arrow of life winging me joy and shame,
The hollow deeps of the sky are dumb to my searching
cry,
Rending the peace of the gods with the melody of her
name.

My quest is by lonely ways—in the cairns of the mighty
dead,
On the high-lorn peaks of snow—panting to hear her
tread,
At the edge of the rainbow well whose whispering
waters tell
Of a face bent over the rim, rose-pale, and as roses red.

Thus she ever escapes me—a wisp of cloud in the air,
A streak of delicate moonshine ; a glory from other-
where ;
*Yet out in the vibrant space I shall kiss the rose in her
face,
I shall bind her fast to my side with a strand of her
flying hair.*



THE PASSING OF THE GAEL.

They are going, going, going from the valleys and the
hills,
They are leaving far behind them heathery moor and
mountain rills,
All the wealth of hawthorn hedges where the brown
thrush sways and trills.

They are going, shy-eyed colleens and lads so straight
and tall,
From the purple peaks of Kerry, from the crags of wild
Imaal,
From the greening plains of Mayo and the glens of
Donegal.

They are leaving pleasant places, shores with snowy
sands outspread ;
Blue and lonely lakes a-stirring when the wind stirs
overhead ;
Tender living hearts that love them, and the graves of
kindred dead.

They shall carry to the distant land a tear-drop in the eye
And some shall go uncomforted—their days an endless
sigh
For Kathaleen Ní Houlihan's sad face, until they die.

Oh, Kathaleen Ní Houlihan, your road's a thorny way,
And 'tis a faithful soul would walk the flints with you
for aye,
Would walk the sharp and cruel flints until his locks
grew grey.

So some must wander to the East, and some must wander
West ;
Some seek the white wastes of the North, and some a
Southern nest :
Yet never shall they sleep so sweet as on your mother
breast.

The whip of hunger scourged them from the glens and
quiet moors,
But there's a hunger of the heart that plenty never cures;
And they shall pine to walk again the rough road that
is yours.

Within the city streets, hot, hurried, full of care,
A sudden dream shall bring them a whiff of Irish air—
A cool air, faintly-scented, blown soft from elsewhere.

*Oh, the cabins long-deserted ! —Olden memories awake—
Oh, the pleasant, pleasant places !—Hush ! the blackbird
in the brake !
Oh, the dear and kindly voices !—Now their hearts are
fain to ache.*

They may win a golden store—sure the whins were
golden too ;
And no foreign skies hold beauty like the rainy skies
they knew ;
Nor any night-wind cool the brow as did the foggy dew.

* * * * *

They are going, going, going, and we cannot bid them
stay ;
The fields are now the strangers' where the strangers'
cattle stray.
Oh ! Kathaleen Ní Houlihan, your way's a thorny way !

THE SHADOW HOUSE OF LUGH.

Dream-fair, beside dream waters, it stands alone :
A winging thought of Lugh made its corner stone .
A desire of his heart raised its walls on high,
And set its crystal windows to flaunt the sky.

Its doors of the white bronze are many and bright,
With wondrous carven pillars for his Love's delight,
And its roof of the blue wings, the speckled red,
Is a flaming arc of beauty above her head.

Like a mountain through mist Lugh towers high,
The fiery-forked lightning is the glance of his eye,
His countenance is noble as the Sun-god's face—
The proudest chieftain he of a proud Dedanaan race

He bides there in peace now his wars are all done—
He gave his hand to Balor when the death-gate was won,
And for the strife-scarred heroes who wander in the
 shade,
His door lieth open, and the rich feast is laid.

He hath no vexing memory of blood in slanting rain,
Of green spears in hedges on a battle plain ;
But through the haunted quiet his love's silver words,
Blow round him swift as wing-beats of enchanted birds.

A grey haunted wind is blowing in the hall,
And stirring through the shadowy spears upon the
 wall,
The drinking horn goes round from shadowy lip to lip—
And about the golden methers shadowy fingers slip.

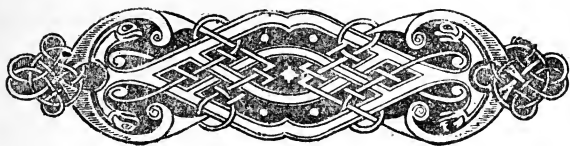
The Star of Beauty, she who queens it there ;
Diademed, and wondrous long, her yellow hair.
Her eyes are twin-moons in a rose-sweet face,
And the fragrance of her presence fills all the place.

He plays for her pleasure on his harp's gold wire
The Laughter-tune that leaps along in trills of fire ;
She hears the dancing feet of *Sidhe* where a white moon
 gleams,
And all her world is joy in the House of Dreams.

He plays for her soothing the Slumber-song :
Fine and faint as any dream it glides along :
She sleeps until the magic of his kiss shall rouse ;
And all her world is quiet in the Shadow-house.

His days glide to night, and his nights glide to day :
With circling of the amber mead, and feasting gay ;
In the yellow of her hair his dreams lie curled,
And her arms make the rim of his rainbow world.*

* I have pieced together, as best I could, from the unpolished, and unfinished, rough drafts. I supplied a missing word here and there, and missing lines—to complete stanzas. S. MACM.



THE GREEN PLOVER.

The Eske wood is lonely, and I go in fear,
Where the shadows are thickest, to seek you, my dear
Your bed is the sere leaf, your roof the green boughs,
And cold is your house, though the summer is near.

You crouch with the wild-birds in bracken and ling,
O'er your sleep, danger-haunted, the wistful larks sing,
And the gay blackbirds fling you their mirth, my
Green Plover,
Lie close in your cover—the Hawk's on the wing.

In the sweep of the Hawk over mountain and moor,
Is danger, Green Plover, relentless and sure
He dangles the lure of his gold where he goes—
'Mid friends and 'mid foes, your doom to secure.

He hath taken your castle, your life he demands,
He hath harried with fire your father's broad lands,
At your broken gate stands all his red-coated men,
And through the green glen roam his murderous bands.

Oh, what if he knew that the bride he would wed,
Were pressing her cheek to your bonny dark head,
That her lips had grown red with the warmth of your
kiss,
And her heart found its bliss in the fond words you said !

But a sail's on the waters—a snowy far sail :
And Christ in His mercy hath sent us a gale,
That from sad Innisfail we may fly in the night—
Green Plover, what sight makes your brown face grow
pale ?

The Hawk ! God be praised for this marvellous grace
Our last earthly look is on each other's face
And death hath no trace of dread fear now that I
Am given to die in my true love's embrace.



NIALL GLONDUBH TO GORMLAI.

(A.D. 913.)

The war-pipes blow, and with joy I go from Aileach's
Halls to the hosting-field,
I have roused my men from each Ulster glen in the
glitter of rustless spear and shield.

They are yours for life, O'Cearbhall's wife, or yours for
death in the battle's blare—
When our blue-sharp swords through Leinster's hordes
shall cut a pathway for vengeance there.

Shall cleave and kill with a mighty will shall hack and
hew for your woe or weal,
Till one who is best on his foeman's breast shall press
in triumph the victor heel.

So now we march 'neath the greening arch of woodland
places, swim rivers wide,
To guard your name from a coward's blame, to bear
you far from a coward's side.

O fair bride, flown on a wayward blown ill-wind to a
loveless royal seat,
Hath a crown consoled for the bliss of old—hath your
sorrow remembered my sorrow, Sweet?

I have worn my pain as a secret chain, yet out of the
years my passion cries—
The ache stirs keen in my heart, O Queen, and my eyes
are wet for your haunting eyes.

Come back, come back, o'er the Northland track, let
us laugh and kiss as in days that were—
When our childhood played in the quicken shade and
I hid my face in your red-gold hair.

In your *grídan* bright for Love's delight, I shall tune
my harp to the songs you sing,
Sweeter than thrush in the twilight hush, or lark at
morn on a rising wing.

You are mine, yea, mine, by a right divine, who dares
deny while my hand is strong?
Though Cearbhall won, from her father's *dún*, my
flower of flowers to her bitter wrong.

But our Clans shall pay the debt this day, and Niall
welcome his Heart's Desire—
His Hope, his Star, through the stress of war, set free
at last from her bondage dire.

Come straight, come straight to the arms that wait—
nor in Cearbhall's arms shall you rest again—
Your knight I go, to meet my foe, and my guerdon
reap on the battle-plain.



CONSUMMATION.

In a sheltered, cool, green place
You and I once stood together
Where the quickens interlace.

Then it was our love declared
(Thro' a throstle's silver chiming)
All the passion that it dared.

Then you called me by my name,
And the answering eyes I lifted
Flashed a flame unto a flame.

Hushed, we watched the eve descend
The rose-flecked stair of day, to see
Our heart's probation fitly end.

Stars and mist and dew-wet flowers
Scented, shielded, and made holy,
That sweet hour of the hours.

Oh Dear Heart, life holds no gift
Half so precious, half so brittle,
As this Love-cup that we lift.

*And remembering, down the years
All my songs shall echo sighing,
All my laughter trill with tears.*







NOTES.

IN TIR NA'N OG.—The Land of Perpetual Youth. The *Sidhe* = the fairies.

CAROLL O'DALY.—In reading Stranza 4, verse 4, it will be recalled that Gráinne wooed Diarmuid. I note this, because I forsee that some casual readers will take *who* as meant for *whom*.

BRIAN BOY MAGEE.—The Massacre of Island Magee (1641), when the English and Scotch troops stationed in Carrickfergus sallied forth and put to the sword, in one night, nearly all the inhabitants of Island Magee, to the number of over two thousand. In Lord Clarendon's "Historical View of the Affairs of Ireland," the date is fixed early in November, 1641, and the number slain is given as three thousand.

ART THE LONELY.—Art the Lonely, son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, reigned thirty years High King of Ireland (according to Keating), from A.D. 152 to 182. He gained his soubriquet of the Lonely or the Melancholy because of the unceasing sorrow he displayed for the death of his two brothers, Connla and Crionna, who were slain by their paternal uncles. An ancient poem, quoted by Keating, contains the following reference to this :—

"Eoichaidh Fionn and Fiachadh Suidhe,
Brothers of Conn, the Hero of the Island,
Destroyed the Princes Connla and Crionna,
Brothers of Art, at whose unhappy fate
He grieved, and with continued sorrow pined,
And so was called the Melancholy Art."

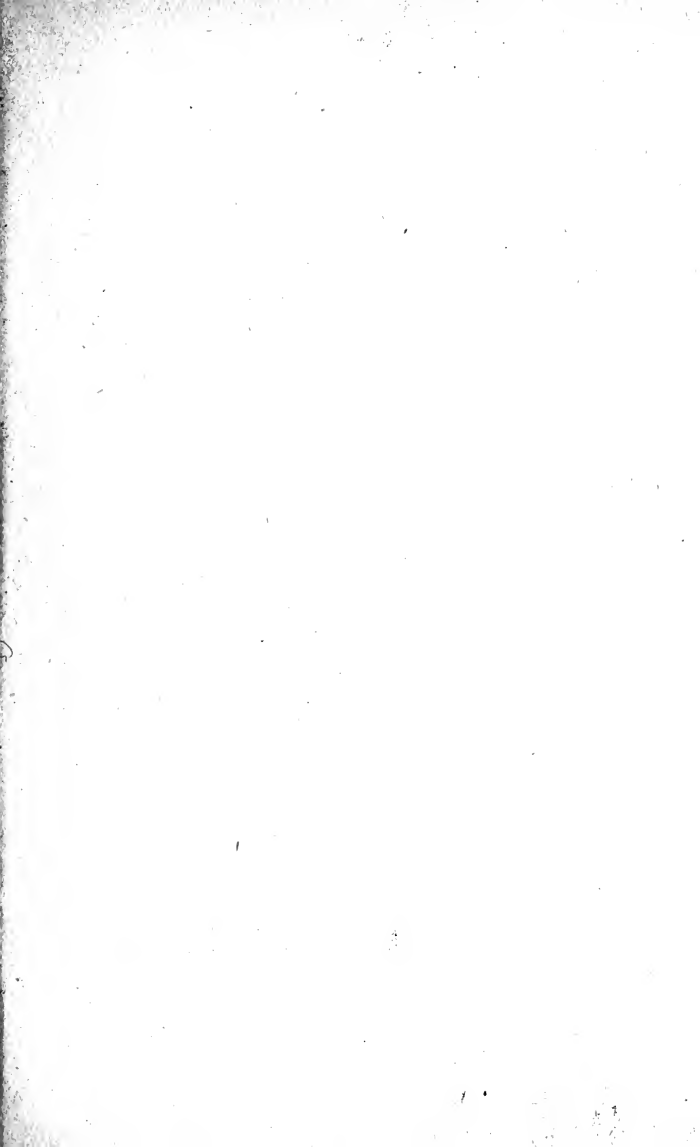
Connla, however, is also the hero of a mythological romance,

Eachtra Condla, which has been preserved in the Book of the Dun Cow, and other ancient MSS. In it he is supposed to have been carried away to Fairyland, where his adventures are many and marvellous.

Art was killed at the Battle of Moy Mucroimhe, near Athenry in Galway, and was succeeded by his son Cormac, who, known to history as Cormac MacArt, was one of the most famous monarchs of Eirinn.

NIALL GLONDUBH TO GORMLAI.—Princess Gormlai, daughter of Flann, High King of Ireland, was betrothed to Cormac MacCullenan, the young King of Munster. He desired to take Holy Orders, and repudiated the arrangement. Gormlai was forced into a marriage with Cearbhall, King of Leinster. Flann and Cearbhall attacked Cormac in Kildare. After a furious battle Cormac was killed, and by Cearbhall's orders his body was mutilated on the field. Returned home, he boasted of his atrocious act in the presence of his wife and the ladies of the Court. Queen Gormlai remonstrated, whereupon he struck her to the ground with his foot. Her young kinsman, Niall Glondubh, Prince of Ulster, took up arms to avenge the insult, when her father, for political reasons, refused. The Queen, however, would not permit his interference, but insisted on leaving her husband and living with her father. Subsequently, after the death of Cearbhall, she married Niall.





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